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The Parish Church of Saint Nicolas, Witham, Essex

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THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST. NICOLAS, WITHAM

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HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

Chipping Hill

The Parish Church of Witham stands at Chipping Hill, set back behind the village green. The hill is a sharp bank of land rising a mere fifty feet up from the meandering River Brain, formerly known as Podsbrook, but it is a prominent position. In the Iron Age a fort was built here, perhaps before B.C. 500. It consisted of a deep ditch and high rampart enclosing a round space. It may have served as a defence on the way from London to Colchester.

In the Roman period an important building is suggested by the many Roman bricks re-used in the church walls and the layer of oyster shells found in places below the ground.

Nothing is known of any early Saxon settlement; there may be evidence buried beneath the irregular contours of the ground. The earliest written record of Witham is in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and refers to King Edward the Elder (King Alfred's son) camping at Maldon whilst the earthwork at Witham was being built and stockaded; the date was 912 A.D. during the war against the Danes.[1] The earthwork was four hundred yards across; it surrounded the earlier iron age fort and remained a notable feature until the beginning of this century. Traces of it are still visible. The Albert Inn stands roughly in the middle of the enclosure.

The village of Witham seems likely to have grown up outside the defensive earthwork, around a large triangular space which became the market-place and fairground. At the time of King Edward the Confessor in the middle of the 11th Century Witham was a place of importance in Essex, and a royal manor.

Historic Features of Chipping Hill

Map references:

1 *Roman Catholic Chapel, 1800 – 1851.*

2 *The Barn at Witham Place, now part of Spring Lodge.*

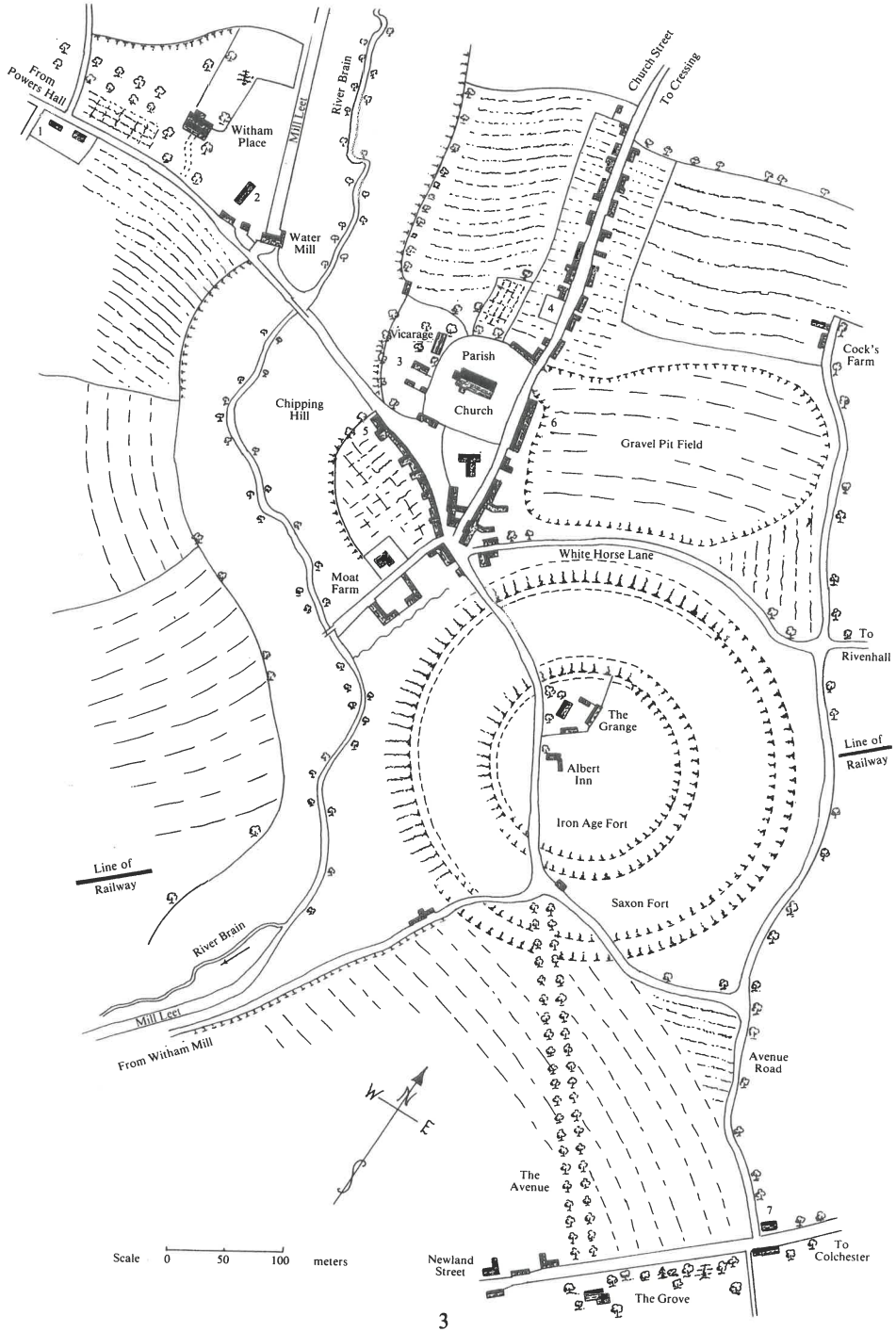
3 *Chantry House, probably built 1445, demolished about 1850.*

4 *Old Burial Ground of the Society of Friends (Quakers).*

5 *Tithe Barn, demolished about 1928.*

6 *Workhouse, 1714 – 1839.*

7 *Roman Catholic Church, built 1851.*



At the time of the Doomsday Book it is reckoned that the population of the parish, probably including Cressing, was roughly 750 people.[2]

The Origin of the Parish Church

The Saxons, who invaded this land in the fifth century, exulted in their prowess in battle and they acknowledged their gods. Their meeting-places included Barstable, in Basildon, which probably means "the pillar of the battle-axes", Harlow, which means "the hill of the army", and Thurstable, near Tiptree, which means "the pillar dedicated to the god Thunor". These same places were all used later for the meetings of the "Hundred" courts. It has been supposed that the hillside at the ancient fort near Witham was the meeting place of the Witham Hundred court and perhaps, before that, of pagan warriors.[3]

When St. Cedd and his fellow monks sailed south from Lindisfarne on their bold mission to convert the East Saxons to the Christian faith, they built their first church at Bradwell-on-Sea. It was in 654 A.D. They travelled throughout Essex, then a more or less independent kingdom, establishing a number of small monasteries or "minsters" from which a handful of monks went out to preach the gospel to the people. Thus no doubt they came to Witham and a Christian community came into being.

No-one knows when a church was first built here. There may have been just a wooden preaching-cross where people gathered in the open air. A church must have existed under royal patronage at least from the time when the village grew up at the side of King Edward the Elder's fort, probably on the present site. It would have been much smaller than the present building. It may originally have been built of timber but have been rebuilt or enlarged from time to time.

The Dedication to St. Nicolas

A few years after their conquest of England, the Normans were equally victorious in South Italy and, in particular, they captured the port of Bari on the Adriatic coast. From there in 1087 a group of sailors, pretending to be on a trade mission to Antioch, called at Myra in Anatolia where St. Nicolas had been

bishop, stole his relics and took them back to their home town. The basilica that still stands at Bari was built in his honour. It became famous, stories of the saint were brought to England and more than four hundred churches were dedicated to him in this country, mostly in the 13th century. One of the earliest was the parish church of Witham.

(In England an 'h' was introduced into the name Nicolas. In Witham for the past fifty years we have dropped that additional letter).

The College of St. Martin-le-Grand

St. Martin-le-Grand, just inside the wall of the City of London, had been created out of the old palace of the Saxon kings of England. Its constitution was a dean and nine canons. In 1147 Henry of Blois, who was William the Conqueror's grandson, Bishop of Winchester and the Pope's representative in England, and who "dominated alike over church and state, over king and archbishop.....at ease whether presiding over a church council or fighting at the head of his armed retainers,"[4] was the dean. Men closely connected with the households of the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the papal legate were the canons. It was there that much of the business of the state was conducted. It has been called the first "Whitehall". Queen Matilda, who by inheritance was patron, had also inherited the ancient royal Manor of Witham.[5] In that year "Walter, Priest of Witteham" received two letters, one from the Queen and one from the King, ordering him to go within three days to St. Martin's in London and there to do fealty for the church at Witham. Queen Matilda wrote because she was presenting the church to the College. The King wrote because it was to him that the College was responsible. The Archbishop of Canterbury was informed by both and he "informed England." The whole transaction seems to have been worked out in St. Martin-le-Grand. The canons of St. Martin's were thorough!

The Queen's grant was of "our church of my manor at Witham, that is the church of St. Nicholas with the church at Cressing."[6] The purpose was to make provision for a tenth canon. The effect was that the income of the church went to the

College and the College became responsible for providing a chaplain to serve the parish and for maintaining the church but they kept the rest of the income for their own use.

A few years later there were still only nine canons despite the Queen's gift. A new constitution was then made that the income from Witham was to provide for other people, "commons", who were given the privilege of living within the college.

In 1223, when the dean tried to usurp the rights of the canons, the Bishop of London intervened to ordain a vicarage for Witham. That is to say that, while the church was still owned and maintained by the college, the parish was to be served by a vicar and he was to be appointed by the bishop. Provision was made for a house and a barn. The vicar received the tithe and paid seven marks (£4.67) a year to the college. The bishop of the diocese has continued to appoint the vicars of Witham ever since.

Cressing was part of the parish of Witham. By the settlement of 1223, the Vicar of Witham was to be responsible for Cressing Church as well as that of "Wiham".

The manor of Witham, excluding the church, had been given by Queen Matilda to the Knights Templar. At this time, i.e. in the 1220s, their new town at "la newe lande", half a mile away, was beginning to grow and the importance of the market at the old village began to decline.[7] Eventually even the name Witham was transferred to the busier hamlet of Newland, but the significance of the village green was retained in the name "Chipping Hill" ('cieping', Old English for market).

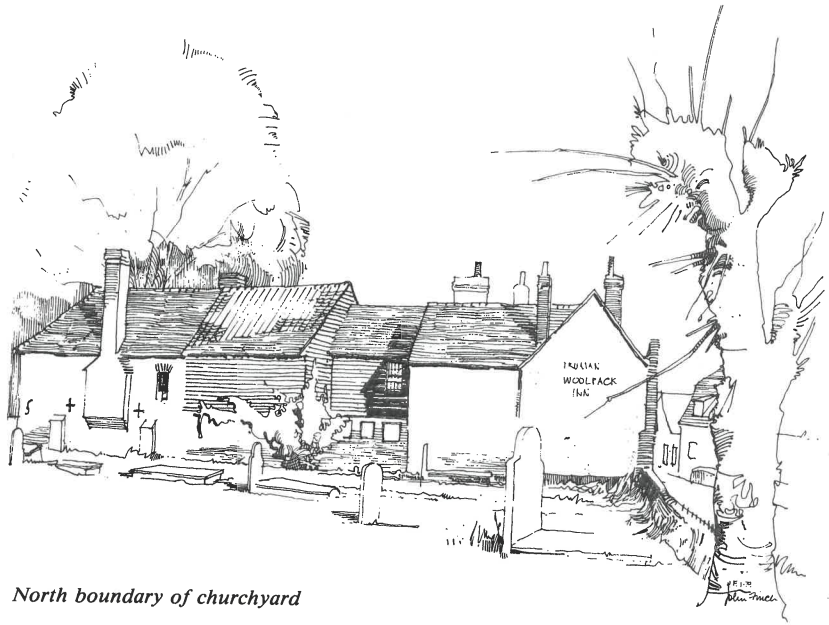
The Rebuilding in the Fourteenth Century

The beginning of the fourteenth century was a prosperous time for England, "a land of expanding population, flourishing agriculture, fair cities, fine churches.....".[8] Witham had a share in the important wool trade and there must have been talk of enlarging or re-building the old parish church and probably of providing the growing hamlet of Newland with its own church. In fact, it was a rebuilt and enlarged St. Nicolas church on its original site that was completed probably in the 1330's to serve the whole parish.

The Order of the Knights Templar had been recently suppressed. Most of their possessions, including the manor of Witham and Cressing, were transferred to the Knights Hospitaller in about 1333. Would the new possessors of the manor have initiated the rebuilding? They did not own the church. The detailed valuation of their manor made in 1338 has no mention of it.[9] However the preserved records of St. Martin-le-Grand also are silent about Witham in the fourteenth century.

The new building consisted of an arcaded nave with north and south aisles, a chancel to the east and a western tower. It was built in the decorated style of gothic architecture, named from the patterns and the flowing lines in the stone tracery of the windows, a style that lasted through the reigns of Edward II and Edward III, from 1307 to 1377.

For the main south entrance an arch that had been added to the earlier church was rebuilt into the new one. Various writers have supposed that other features survived from the earlier church, especially the tall, sharply-pointed tower arch, with its sturdy half-round columns, at the west end of the nave. But the late Lawrence King, a leading authority on church architecture,



North boundary of churchyard

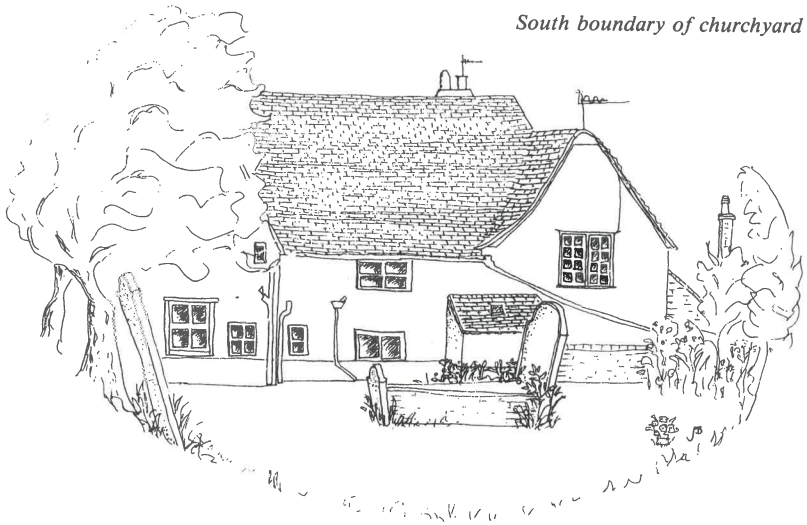
pointing to the mouldings at the head of the columns, said "They are typical of the decorated period and contemporary with the nave."

The church as built in the 1330's remains today with four additions, two on each side.

The Vestry

The first addition to the church was the vestry later in the fourteenth century. The outer walls nearly three feet thick were built of big, irregular blocks of hard Kentish ragstone, which contrasts with the flintwork of the main building. It was, and is, approached from the chancel through a low, but handsomely carved archway in which the original oak door is still in use. The vestry was of two storeys, the upper floor being approached by a spiral stone stairway in the north-east corner.

Because there was the upper floor and because the door opened inwards and had internal bars, it is thought that a priest or an anchorite lived there. (An anchorite was a holy man or woman living a celibate life, residing at and serving the church in various ways. The most famous was the Lady Julian of Nowich whose 'Revelations of Divine Love' were written in the last quarter of the fourteenth century.)

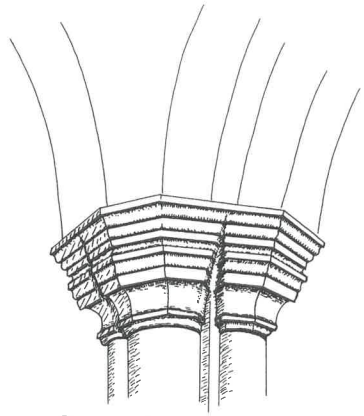


South boundary of churchyard

However in 1366 this church was chosen for the ordination of forty nine candidates to be priests, deacons, sub-deacons or acolytes by Simon of Sudbury, Bishop of London.[10] Bishop's Hall at Chelmsford had recently been burnt down and the manor house at Wickham Bishops was Simon's favourite country home. The fine new church at Witham was therefore convenient to him but, for such an important occasion with so many people taking part, a vestry might have seemed useful if not essential. It seems possible that the addition to the church was made for that occasion and it has been suggested that the upper room may have been used as a muniment room.

South Porch

It was probably late in the fourteenth century that the porch was added to give protection and dignity to the main entrance. It It was built to match the main body of the church in style and materials, but with a splendid gargoyle on each side, the one exposed to the west wind now much weathered. The windows have stone mullions and tracery. The porch is not bonded into the south aisle wall and is clearly an addition to the church. The battlemented parapets are later embellishments.



Capital of column in arcade

The Chantries

In 1349 came the plague, the Black Death,in which a third of the population of England perished. In the summer of 1381 there was the great insurrection, a protest at the old feudal customs that still gave many people a degraded and unfree status. Men came from south Essex to persuade the people of Witham to join the revolt. A huge crowd attacked and burnt Cressing Temple, the headquarters of the Manor of Witham and the home of the Treasurer of England. There was killing and robbery in Witham.[11] A month later, when the rebellion

had been quelled, the men chiefly involved were brought before a Commission appointed by the young King Richard II to deal out retribution. The Commission held a session in Witham, perhaps in the nave of the church. One of the men summoned to attend was Robert Rikdon of Witham who, however, claimed that his house had been attacked and that he had been forced to join the crowd. He was the grandson of Elizabeth Powers, owner of the manor of Powers Hall.

At about this time the practice of entering the names of the departed in the "Book of Life" at a monastery, to be remembered in the prayers of the monks, became less used. Instead, those who could afford it made endowments for "chantries" whereby a priest was appointed and a place was dedicated for the saying of prayers and the singing of mass. The endowment consisted usually of land and buildings, the rent from which would pay the costs of the chantry including the stipend of the chaplain. It required a royal licence.

Two chantries were founded at Witham in 1397 and 1444. The first, which came to be called the St. John's Chantry, was founded by Robert Rykedon, perhaps with his involvement in the 1381 revolt still clear in his memory, and Thomas Bircheleigh. A chaplain was appointed. He was required to live in the town and to have no other paid employment, to say a daily requiem mass and other prayers and psalms at the altar of St. John the Baptist. He was also to assist the Vicar at mass, matins and vespers every day. He had to look after the estate that formed the endowment and consisted of two houses, a hundred and thirty two acres of arable land, and meadow, pasture and woodland (still called Chantry Wood). He was to keep the chantry and its furnishings in repair and to keep a light burning before the altar of Our Lady. He was to pay ten pounds a year to Thomas Bircheleigh who was to provide him in return with board and lodging in his own house and a salary of four marks (£2.67) a year.

After the death of the founders the appointment of future chaplains was to be made by "six of the more honourable and trustworthy parishoners". A chaplain who failed to live in the parish or to keep the chantry chapel and its furnishings in repair, or who sold off any part of the endowment, or indulged

in acts of adultery from which he did not desist at the warnings of "six senior and respectable parishoners" could be turned out.[12]

By the second chantry a chaplain was to celebrate divine service daily for the good estate of the King and of Joan Childe, who made the endowment, and "to observe other prayers and works of piety".

It became the practice of the Chantry of St. John to make annual gifts of twenty loads of wood for faggots and ten pounds of candles to the poor people of Witham in their almshouses, and of the "Jinnet Childes alias St. Mary's" Chantry to give annually thirteen shirts and smocks at thirteen pence each to thirteen poor persons and two shillings in coin to "le allmespeople"[13].

Initially the chantry chapels were probably in the two aisles, at their eastern ends. But in the latter half of the fifteenth century, at different dates, two extensions to the church were made and it has always been understood that they were built to serve as the chapels of the two chantries.

The South Chapel

It may indeed have been built soon after 1444, the date of Childe's Chantry. It was dedicated to St. Mary and is now called the Lady Chapel. It has flint walls, with squared stones of hard limestone for the coping and corner stones, like the main walls of the church.

The North Chapel

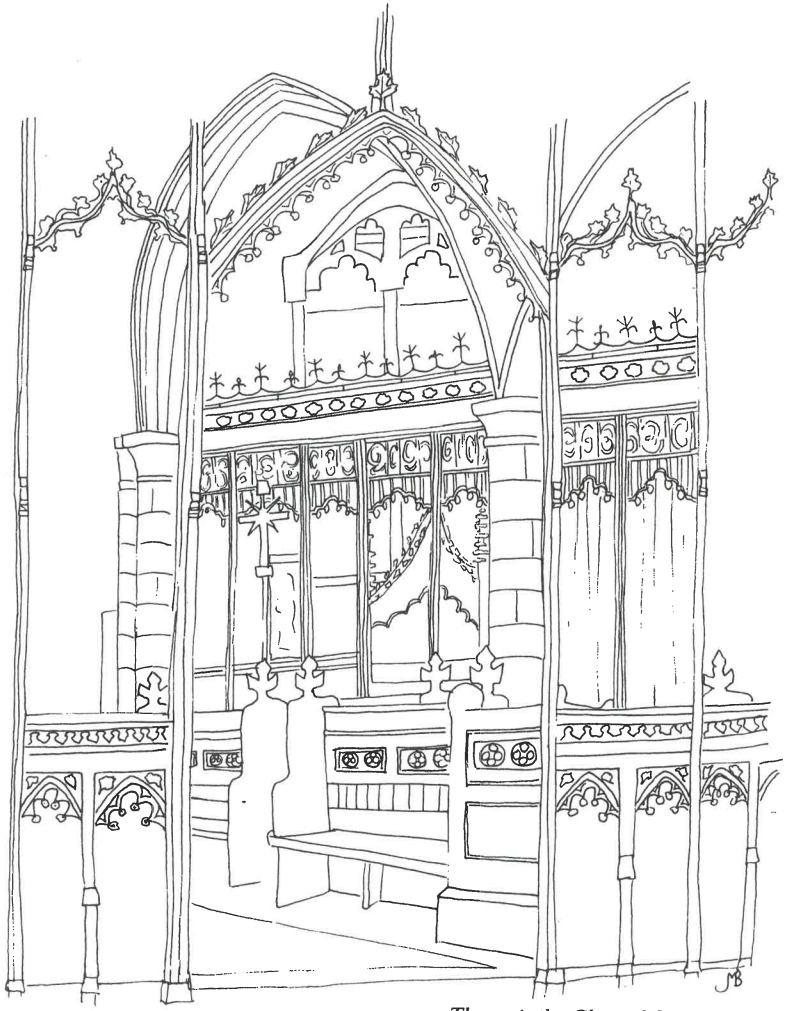
It appears to have been built later than that on the south and to have been dedicated to St. John the Baptist. It filled the small gap between the end of the aisle and the vestry and now contains the organ. The outside wall is almost wholly occupied by a broad four-light window with distinctive "perpendicular" tracery.

In the five hundred years since the completion of the two side chapels no stone has been added to the church other than for renewal or other repair, in which the form and pattern of the original stonework seems nearly always to have been followed.

Only the upper part of the tower has been rebuilt in a different form, and perhaps the upper part of the vestry, and the staircase turret added to the tower.

The Break with Cressing

At the time the second chantry was being founded "the dwellers in the hamlet of Cressinges in Wytham parish" sent a partition to the Archbishop of Canterbury that a priest or vicar should be



Through the Chancel Screen

provided for Cressing as Sir Thomas Smyth, Vicar of Wytham, had refused to bear the charge and costs necessary "and though the dwellers aforesaid have complained to the said vicar, to the archedekne of Colchestre and to the Bishop (of London) they can get no redress so that for seven years past and more their children have died unbaptised and many inhabitants without howsil or shrifte like Jewes or Sarazins".[14] On arbitration Thomas Smyth was held responsible for Cressing. Subsequently Cressing was made a separate parish but to this day the Vicar of Witham shares in the appointment of the Vicar of the united benefice of Cressing, White Notley and Faulkbourne.

The Interior as it was

Inside the church the walls were "coloured a deep red, diapered with flaming stars in black". The student of medieval glass who visited St. Nicolas during the restoration of 1877 when the colour was being scraped off the walls went on to say:"This style of colouring would be effective if the windows were filled (as I suspect they were) with bright silvery ornamental designs in glass" as are to be seen in Exeter Cathedral or the Chapter House of York Minster.[15]

The floor of the church would have been of earth covered with straw, with benches for the old people along the walls. The chancel would have been originally partitioned off from the nave more fully than now, the nave used for many day-to-day purposes and the chancel kept for the drama of the mysteries of God. The chantry chapels, while still within the aisles, were probably screened off too.

The Chancel Screen

The building of the two chapels both with archways opening into the chancel gave the east end of the church a more open and spacious character. In the same period, mid or late fifteenth century, a new oak screen was built between the nave and the chancel. On each side of the wide central entrance, three openings enabled the ceremonies at the sanctuary to be seen by the people. This screen is a fine example of fifteenth century carving. It was painted red with the carving picked out in gold,

perhaps with paintings of saints in the panels. The lower part remains to this day in good condition, but without the colour.

Above the screen there was an oak beam, supported at each end by posts against the walls. This held the rood, i.e. the cross with a carved figure of Christ upon it and, no doubt, the figure of His Mother Mary and a disciple, one on each side. The cross would have been smaller and lighter in appearance than the heavy, foliated, oak cross now in the same position, and delicately carved and painted.

The Church in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

The churches in this period supplied education and poor-relief. They provided the chief recreation of the people by processions, plays and spectacles related to the seasons. They formed the background of markets and fairs. They were respected and often loved by the people, who, according to their ability, showered gifts of vestments, books, ornaments and plate upon them.[16]

In all this Witham church was not unlike others. Two examples are among records that are still preserved. Hugh Smith of Witham in 1486 bequeathed in his will a cow to find a light to burn before the image of Our Lady of Pity, a cow to St. James' light and a cow to St. Anthony's light.[17] The churchwardens' account book at Chelmsford records the hiring out of players' garments for miracle plays, including a payment made by Witham as late as the 1560's.[18] The church provided colour to the lives of the people.

It was in 1547, the first year in the reign of the boy-king, Edward VI, that the government suppressed the chantries. The preamble to the bill that went through Parliament spoke of devoting to education the money from the sale of the land which provided their income. Not much was used in this way. Instead the endowments were sold to meet the costs of government. The Witham sale included "le chauntrye howse in Newelonde streate". But the other chantry house close to St. Nicolas churchyard may have remained in the Vicars' hands; it still stood within the Vicarage grounds in 1838 near the present car-park but by then only used as outbuildings. Certain goods were taken from the church and sold by the two churchwardens, viz

"two candlestyckes of sylver and a pyxe of sylver" and a paxe of sylver. The sum of £16 17s 0d (£16.85) was received and all the money was employed and spent in reparation of the church and to pay the church debts. It was done with "th'assent of th'ole parrysh".[19] The images and much else were probably destroyed.

A certificate that gave an account and valuation of the chantries at the time of their suppression contained these comments: "Wittham...is a great and populous town, having in it by estimation five hundred of housling people and above (i.e. people who attended mass) and a thoroughfare town for the king's liege-people to lodge in and they have none other priest but only the vicar and the said chantry priests".[20]

It was at this time that the reformers "systematically began the spoliation of the parish churches".[21]

The Interior – after the Reformation

"With the zeal for clearing old objects out of churches and old ideas out of mens' minds went an equal zeal for edification, especially through a revival of preaching... The reading of the Bible and the preaching of sermons now took pride of place in the Church services which had previously been held by the sacrifice of the Mass".[22]

Normally the priest now conducted Morning and Evening Prayer from a seat in the nave. The Eucharist was celebrated generally only once a month. "The Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments were written on the walls of every parish church in place of old medieval wall-paintings" and it became the practice to build pulpits.[23]

Just when all the changes were made in this church is not known. "The Lord's Prayer and the Creed are well painted in gilt upon tables neatly decorated and which are affixed to the wainscot on each side of the Communion table". [24]

A high pulpit was built appropriate to the oratory of the day, with a reading desk below. Pews were fitted into the church; the length of the sermons made seats necessary. "The pews of nave, north aisle and south aisle are of uniform construction with a pulpit and reading desk which are situated on the left of the middle pace in going to the altar" (i.e. where the pulpit now

is.)[25] Mary Bramston, recalling her childhood in the 1840's, said that the pews were so high she could only peer over the top of them when standing on the seat.[26]

The Church Services

In 1723 the Vicar, George Sayer, in reply to the questions which the Bishop of London asked, preparatory to his or the archdeacon's visit, wrote, "Divine Service is performed twice every Lord's Day, on every Wednesday and Friday and all Holy Days. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is now (as was usual during all my predecessors' time) administered four times in the year, but as this is too seldom for so large a parish I hope to be able, by degrees, to bring in a more frequent communion".[27] But he did not.

In 1810 a later vicar, Andrew Downes, apparently to excuse an increase in the number of communion services, wrote "The Sacrament is administered eight times in a year viz. Good Friday, Easter Day, Whit Sunday and Trinity Sunday; the Sundays immediately before and after Michaelmas Day and Christmas Day and the Sunday following. This is done to afford the inhabitants who, being at a distance from the church, might be deterred by bad weather from attending the first celebration, a second opportunity of coming."[28]

The Old Organ

An organ was installed in the seventeenth century. It seems to have been renovated by Dr. Warly in 1701 – 6 and at that time placed in the upper gallery at the west end of the church. In 1819 "Dr. Warly's organ is still in use though it is now impaired by the hand of time". It was "enlarged and put into complete repair" in 1852 and moved to the north chapel.[29]

The Royal Arms

"The more ardent reformers wanted to exhibit some outward and visible sign of change from an ecclesiastical to a royal supremacy and sought to set up the Royal Arms within the churches".[30] The churchwardens of a City of London church were taken to court in 1546 and admonished for setting up the arms of King Henry VIII at the east end of their church. The

practice, however, spread of setting up the arms of the reigning monarch in the chancel arch above the rood screen, replacing the former rood.

In this church the arms of William III, 1688 – 1702, finely carved and painted, stood on the rood loft over the central gateway of the chancel screen until about 1850.

The Galleries

The church was crowded for the Sunday services. From the later part of the seventeenth century there was a gallery at the west end of the church, then or eventually of two tiers. In 1802 there were complaints that people were prevented from attending services through lack of seats and a faculty was obtained for constructing a gallery in the south aisle. In 1814 a north gallery was added and in 1839 a gallery in the Lady Chapel. Pews extended to the foot of the pulpit, almost to the chancel screen, and faced sideways in the Lady Chapel, displacing the chapel altar. The church could hold eleven hundred people.

As the accommodation "was insufficient and the enlargement of the church was not considered practicable, a subscription list was opened for the building of the new church of All Saints".[31] It is very probable that the people of the fashionable roadside town of Newland, by this time called Witham, were pleased to have their own "parish church". The new church was consecrated on All Saints Day 1842.

After the opening of All Saints' Church the pressure was relieved and in 1849 the two western galleries were removed. Here are the reminiscences of Mary Bramston:

> "The west window and beautiful tower arch were previously bricked up and plastered over and in front were two great galleries, the organ in the highest one.
>
> The Sunday School children sat in the lower gallery, the girls all in white caps and tippets.
>
> There was great excitement, when my father came into dinner one day and told how, walled up behind the two west galleries, now removed, he had discovered a beautiful Early English arch through which you saw a fine decorated window, hitherto used to light the bell-ringers in the tower".[32]

In the repewing of the nave in 1849 the charitable society that made a grant of £70 stipulated that one hundred and twenty of the seats should be set apart and declared to be free for the use of the poor for ever.

Vaults and Memorials

Memorial stones have been laid in the floor of the church commemorating leading persons connected with the parish. Four of them (two in the chancel) can be seen to have had inlaid brass figures (which had disappeared more than two hundred years ago). Other memorials are fixed to the walls. From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, family burial chambers were excavated from time to time under the floor of the chancel, side-chapels, nave and aisles. It was a practice that in Chelmsford Parish Church so weakened the foundations that in 1800 the nave crashed to the ground. In St. Nicolas the vaults were filled in some sixty years ago.

The painted glass in the windows and much of the furniture also serve as memorials.

The Barnardiston Paten

Catherine Barnardiston, one of whose gifts to the parish is recorded later, also gave to the Church a beautiful little paten. It was made in 1617 and the inscription reads "This is the Ladye Barnardistors guifte to the Parishe of Witham in the Countie of Essex". The arms of the Banks, into which family she was born, are inscribed on the dish, which is on permanent loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum, but is brought back to Witham for exhibition from time to time.

1840 – 1877

In 1840 John Bramston, then Vicar of Great Baddow, received a letter from the Bishop of London:

> "I have much pleasure in offering you the vicarage of Witham... It is a very important parish and I know but few persons to whom I could so satisfactorily entrust it".[33]

He accepted. Young, able and with authority, he was in sympathy with the movement in the Church of England associated with the names of Keble and Newman. One of their views was that greater reverence should be given to the altar and its surroundings than had been customary.

In 1844 the present glass was put into the East Window of the Chancel. The opportunity was taken of constructing below it an arcade of five small arches to serve as a reredos to the altar. The two niches on each side had texts from St. John's Gospel and the Book of Revelations inscribed in Old English lettering in red and black, while the middle one had a stone cross eighteen inches high carved in it. This cross led to complaints. However the niches with their texts and the central one with the carved stone cross were retained. Indeed they are still in position but they are behind the present reredos.

In the 1840's churches were reintroducing "customs and garments which had died out in the sixteenth century".[34] John Bramston began to preach in a surplice instead of a black gown, and he turned to the east for prayers at the altar with his back to the congregation. Complaints were made to the Bishop who wrote to the Vicar requiring him to consult before introducing further new customs.

However it was John Bramston who in the 1840's was leading the way that the Church in Witham and elsewhere has followed, and the changes made to the conduct of services and the furnishing of the church since have followed his lead.

In the 1870's St. Nicolas Church was showing its age and was in need of repair. The nave roof was giving concern, the outside stonework was badly decayed, the interior was drab and bore the scars of demolished galleries. The pier behind the pulpit was cracking and threatening the stability of the whole building. In 1877 a thorough restoration was put in hand and the Church was closed from May to December. The chancel roof had already been renewed; the nave roof was now rebuilt and slated; the decay stones of all the outside walls were renewed, and the flintwork was repointed.

It was then that the last of the galleries was taken down and the modern pewing completed. The stairway that early in the century had been cut through and had so weakened the pier was filled in and the pier made solid.

The upper part of the tower was rebuilt, the stair turret was added and the outside doorway made to the vestry. H. W. King wrote: "The ravages of decay have been arrested, the hideous deformities of the last century swept away and another of our sacred edifices has been restored to much of its ancient character and dignity if not in all its pristine splendour of internal decoration".[35]

Five years after leaving this parish to become Dean of Winchester Cathedral, John Bramston wrote congratulating his successor on the completion of the restoration – "God grant to you and all around you the full enjoyment of the restored dear old Church".[36]

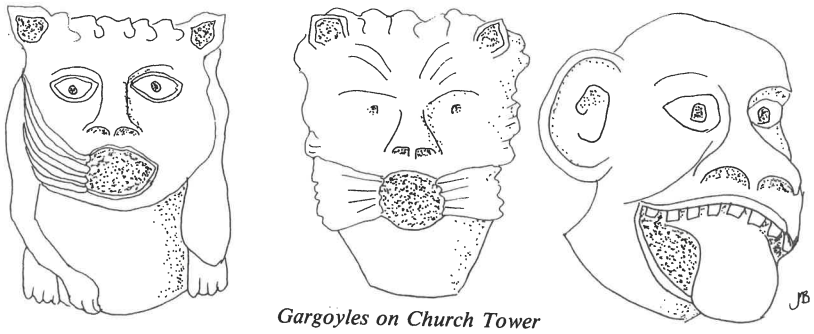
A TOUR OF THE CHURCH OUTSIDE

The Tower

This has stood, a landmark on the hill, for six and a half centuries. It was built in about the 1330's, like the rest of the church, of flints and stones, interspersed with Roman brick. The flints and stones were probably quarried from the extensive gravel-pit in which Chipping Hill Infants School now stands, on the opposite side of Church Street. The Roman bricks or tiles were of value in bonding the outside skin of flints to the core.

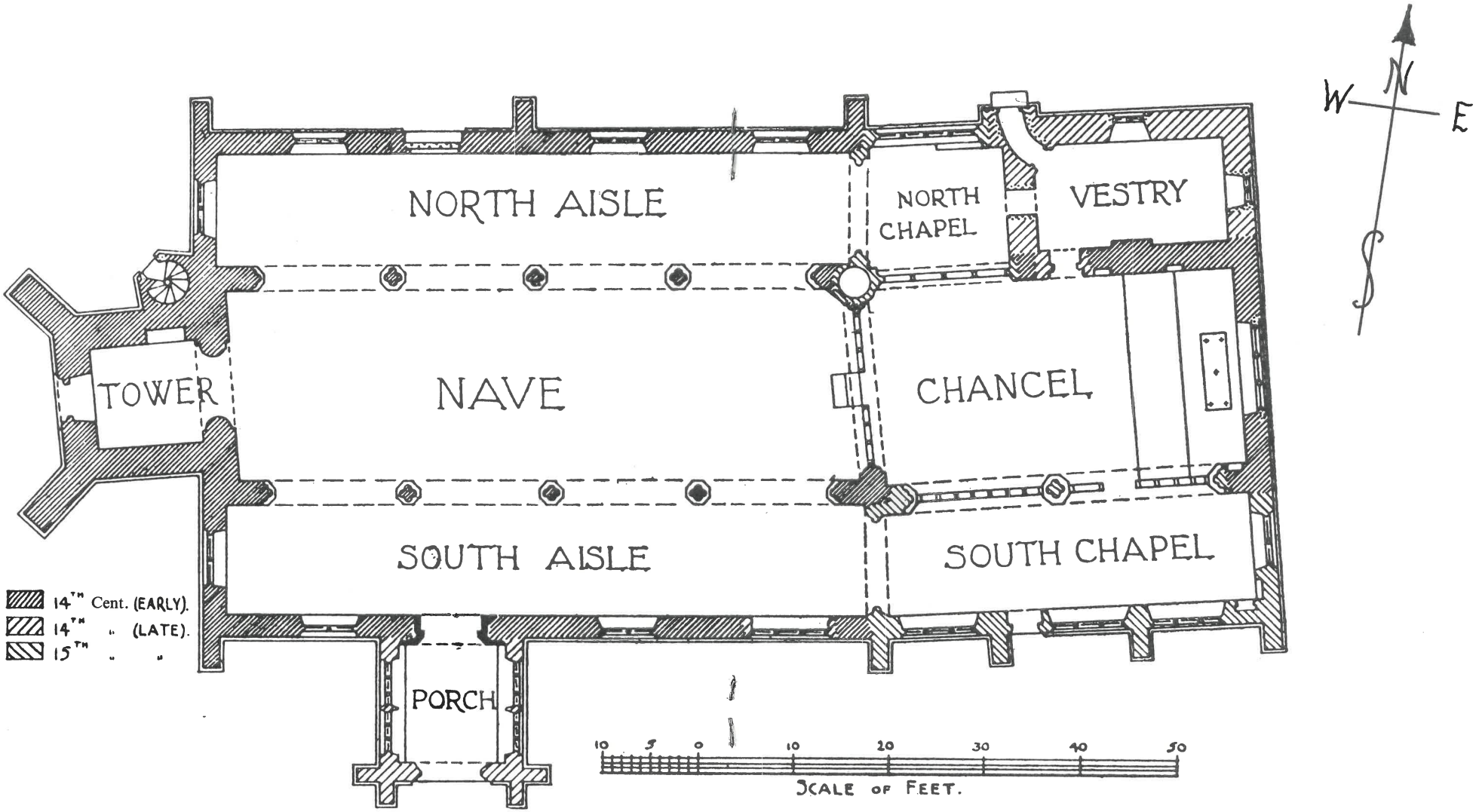
The tower stands sixty-five feet high; the walls are nearly four feet thick and there are massive buttresses at the corners. The parapet at the top is battlemented. The rainwater from the roof flows through the mouths of two gargoyles on each of the four sides.

The tower has not always looked as it does now. Formerly it was more squat and was surmounted by a wooden turret that held the bells. But the turret decayed and in 1743 was replaced by a red brick top to the tower which rose fourteen feet higher than the present parapet. This was criticised both for the use of red brick and for its height. H. W. King, on his visit of 1862,



Gargoyles on Church Tower

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST NICHOLAS.



Based on the plan of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, 1921

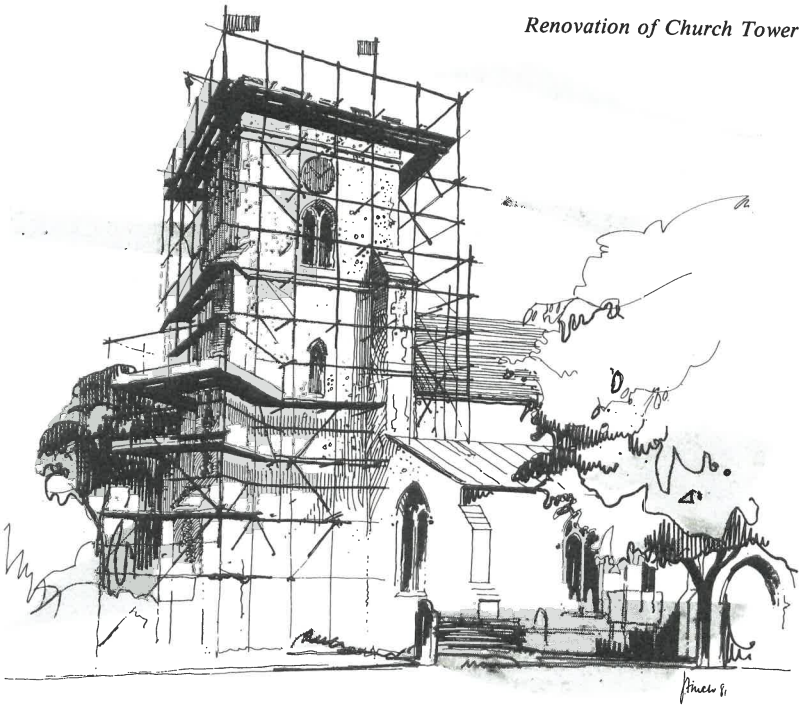
was, "impressed with the want of a stately tower proportioned to the edifice".[37] In 1877 after much debate about the suitable proportions of tower to church and height of tower to breadth and about "keeping things as they were", the red brick top was demolished and the flint and stone tower walls raised to their present height.

Ten years later the clock was added. It was presented by Mary Bramston on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1887.

It was in 1981 when flints were found to be falling to the ground that the tower was repointed and the decayed stonework renewed. The surface mortar may be expected to stand the weather for a hundred years.

The big west door is the entrance used on special occasions by the bishop. A newly appointed vicar to the parish knocks at this door to claim the keys of the church. The arch is part of the original structure, but the door which was exposed to the west winds has been renewed.

Renovation of Church Tower



In the angle between the tower and the north aisle a turret has been built to accommodate a spiral stone stairway. Built in 1877 it re-used stone steps both from the former vestry stairs and the stairs that led to the rood loft. The turret stairs lead to the ringing chamber and from there a ladder leads to the belfry.

Although the tower is so massive and its walls so thick, the stonework is subject to continual small movement as a result of changes in temperature and humidity and of the ringing of the bells.

In the late 1960's the oak bell frame became loose and when the bells were rung hammered against the outside walls, endangering the tower. The bells were silenced for several years. In 1973 they were lowered and the oak frames were removed and replaced by a new cast-iron frame built on steel girders. The bells were re-hung later that year and dedicated by the Bishop of Chelmsford on 4 December.

The peal is of eight bells in the key of F. The biggest, the tenor bell, has a diameter of nearly four feet and weighs nearly a ton. Three of them were founded early in the seventeenth century, one in 1743, two in 1877 and two in 1932. Hanging above them there is the small sanctus bell which for many years hung in the former Institute in Newland Street.

North Side

Most of the windows of the church have pointed arches, each side of the arch being a simple arc of a circle. Mullions and patterned tracery of stone provide the frame for the glass windows. They are typical of the "decorated" period of architecture in the first half of the fourteenth century.

The north doorway looks as though it was blocked up as soon as the church was built. The mixture of stones and Roman bricks and of knapped and rounded flints is similar to that in the surrounding walls but it was built with extra care.

The high roof and clerestorey wall of the nave are given support by the thrust of the aisle roof which in turn depends on the buttresses against the aisle wall. The repair and partial rebuilding of these buttresses were therefore put first in the current programme of repairs.

The North Chapel, built late in the fifteenth century, filled

the gap between the aisle and the vestry. The wide window has a bluntly pointed arch and the uneven surface of the wall has been rendered over.

The Vestry at the north-east corner of the church has an appearance of rugged independence from its ragstone walls. The square projection contained the spiral stone stairs to the upper floor. The narrow upper windows are original. The lower window, with two cusped arches, retains the original design as may be seen by the two carved pieces of ragstone that remain. The battlemented parapet looks like a later addition. The arched entrance was built in the nineteenth century.

East End

That the chancel was originally unaccompanied by vestry or Lady Chapel is clear by the base stones on either side of the gable and by the discontinuous string course at the plinth.

South Side

It is recorded that there was much Roman brick in the wall of the Lady Chapel, perhaps re-used from the demolished chancel walls. In the nineteenth century the wall was given a new outer layer of flints to make the appearance neater. The battlemented parapet resembles that of the vestry. The Lady Chapel windows have arches of a simple unpointed curve. The stone mullions are carried vertically upwards to the curve of the arch, a feature of the Perpendicular style of architecture, a style exclusively English that was in use from 1377 to 1547. The oak door was designed by Roy Belsham and made and presented by the late Harry Richards in 1951.

South Porch

The various stones used in the building and repair of the church can be compared here. Both the outer and the inner arches of the porch are made of Barnack stone from a quarry now closed near Stamford in Lincolnshire. It is a very hard and durable limestone. It was used also for the external window-sills, string courses, coping and the angles of the church. Here it remains in good condition after six hundred years of exposure to the weather.

For the recent repairs of the buttresses and the Lady Chapel windows a similar stone from Clipsham in Lincolnshire has been used. It is equally hard, with interestingly varied colours and we hope it will be equally lasting.

In the middle part of this century white Portland stone was used for repairs. Hard and durable though it is, it has a harsh appearance and is out of harmony with the medieval church.

In the repair of the south aisle windows on both sides of the porch a sandstone was used.

The tracery of the porch windows is made of a stone that has not lasted well. It may be part of the repairs made in the nineteenth century at a time when Bath stone was much favoured but has proved not to be lasting where exposed to the weather.

The Entrance Doorway

The arch to the south door is the oldest part of the church. "This superb doorway" was probably built as an improved entrance to an earlier church on this site. A stonemason is recorded as living in Witham in 1185; what other work could he have been engaged on at that date?[38] The arch was later rebuilt and fitted to the new building. Two of the tree shafts on each side consist of a single stone and may originally have been free-standing. The third was carved as part of the jamb. The shafts support a pointed arch with chevron decoration typical of the late twelfth century.

There is a dripstone course along the outer edge of the arch, which was probably added at the rebuilding. It ends on one side with the badly weathered head of a man who appears to be a mitred bishop and, on the other, of a woman. There is, however, a local tradition that the heads represent Stephen and Matilda.

The pair of heavy oak doors with shallow carving on their face has hung there since the fifteenth century. The inside half of this doorway, with a much flatter arch, is part of the 1330's design.

A TOUR OF THE CHURCH INSIDE

The Font

This is placed symbolically near the entrance. It replaced an earlier font of unknown design and age and at one time was in the central gangway leading from the west door. Its octagonal base appears to be of Purbeck marble and was probably the stone on which the earlier font stood. It may have survived from an earlier church.

The Tower

On the inner walls there are fixed the two large "tables" containing the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, which were formerly on the Sanctuary wall on either side of the Communion Table. They are painted with gold lettering on board and the ornate gesso frame is painted red and black.

Other boards fixed to the tower walls record charities. One of these reads:

> 25th Feby 1632. The said Dame Catherine Barnardiston gave £100 to this parish, the interest to be laid out in 12 two penny loaves every Sunday for the benefit of 12 poor people. With this money the workhouse, cottage and 6 acres of land adjoining belonging to the parish were purchased.

A number of people living in the town recall going to the Church Vestry every Sunday when they were children, picking up a basket of bread rolls and delivering the rolls to certain poor people living in Church Street. The practice was discontinued as no longer useful in the 1939 – 45 war.

A board records that George Armond in 1627 left an almshouse in Blunt's Hall Road for two poor widows.

The earliest of the charities is that of Thomas Green dated 1491. These and the others recorded on the walls are now administered by Witham United Charities.

Another board records the improvements made to the church in 1701 – 6 and the people who contributed to the cost.

The West Window was given by George Gilbert Scott the well-known architect as a memorial to his Clerk of the Works who in 1849 was killed in the course of building the church of St. Nicolas in Hamburg. There has been a persisting rumour that the death of H. G. Mortimer, who was a Witham man, was not accidental.

The purpose of the blocked-up archway is not known. The door within it was formerly the outside door to the Lady Chapel. It has "1632 George Armond" carved on it.

The bell rope rings the sanctus bell.

The Nave

(Nave means a ship. The structure of an early church built of timber resembled that of a ship, since wooden ships were, and are, built upside down).

It is readily seen that the chancel, nave and tower are not on the same axis nor are the columns of the arcade exactly opposite each other. This may seem remarkable for a church substantially built as a whole. There have been various theories why this is a feature of medieval churches. The most likely is that the builders did not regard exact measurements or symmetry to be important; rather, that the irregularities that arose from the nature of the site and from the building materials they were using and from their own building methods were acceptable.

The high nave roof is nearly fifty feet above the floor at its ridge. The four tie-beams are original but have new pieces fitted to them. Many of the oak rafters and collars were renewed during the 1877 restoration.

The arcade is built of clunch, a hard form of chalk from Bedfordshire. It shows signs of the damage now made good where the galleries had been fitted and also of powdering where the "Tortoise" stove that heated the building in the early part of this century stood near the south door.

The oak pews were installed in stages from 1849 to 1877 but the front few have been removed to provide more space in front of the chancel arch.

No record has been found relating to the carved oak pulpit. It was probably made and placed in its present position at or soon after 1877.

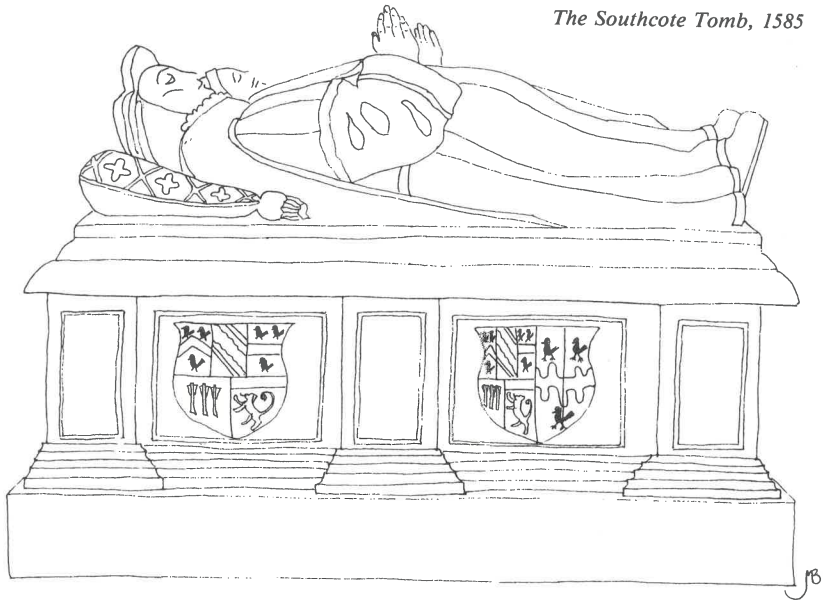
The lectern was presented by Admiral Sir William Luard and Lady Luard on the occasion of their golden wedding anniversary in 1908.

In the clerestory walls of the nave, above the aisles, there were probably originally only three windows on each side, all of them round as two of them still are. At about 1500, and probably soon after the time that the present screen was built, one was enlarged and another added. These greatly increased the light shining on the rood.

North Aisle

(Aisle means a wing). The aisle roof with its carved beams is original. The eastermost beam is crested as well as grooved, perhaps to give this part of the aisle the distinction suited to its use as a side chapel.

The Southcote Tomb, 1585



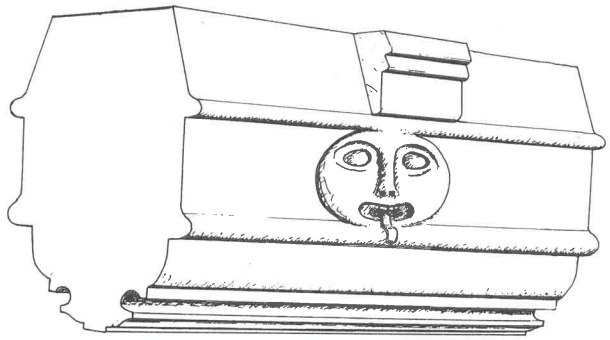
At the west end of the aisle is the tomb of John Southcote, an eminent judge of Queen Elizabeth I's reign, and his wife Elizabeth. He did not like the conflict between the reformers and those who maintained the "Old Religion". When he was on the bench at Norwich a Roman Catholic priest happened to be tried for his life. Seeing that he could not save the man's life by giving a favourable charge to the jury, rather than give a sentence of death he stood up in open court, threw off his judge's robes and there and then resigned his office. He retired to his home in Surrey but when, a year later, at the age of seventy-four he died, he was buried here in St. Nicolas.[39] The alabaster figures are of John, attired in the scarlet, miniver robe of a judge, and Elizabeth.[40]

Their descendants were staunch Roman Catholics; they owned Witham Place of which the barn at Spring Lodge and the high brick wall nearby are the remains. They provided continuity of the local Roman Catholic congregation through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Six generations of the family are buried in their family vault under the north chapel.

In the floor is a "shroud slab" of stone with the indented outline of a brass. The brass figure probably faced frontwards. On the "mouth scroll" a prayer would have been inscribed. The memorial is likely to date from about 1560.

North Chapel

The arch at the approach is unlike others in the church. The lower part of the curve is part of a tight circle and the upper is



Carved Tie-beam in North Aisle

part of a more open circle. Such "four-centred" arches began to be extensively used late in the fifteenth century.

Beneath this arch is the church chest which may be nearly as old as the church. After the suppression of the monasteries laws were made requiring provision of church chests both for receiving alms for the poor and for holding the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials. They were to have a slot for the alms and three locks, one key of which was for the vicar to hold and one for each of the two churchwardens. This plain chest is still in use; it has three locks and hasps and keys, but there is no slot in the massive oak lid which may have been fitted to the chest in the seventeenth century; each side of the chest is made from a single oak plank.

Under the church chest is "a stone coffin slab of early twelfth century date, broken and much worn, slightly coped, bearing a cross".[41] If that date is right it was before the Knights Templar came to Witham.

In the north west corner of the chapel is a wall memorial to John Southcote, the Judge. Although it cannot easily be seen from among the organ pipes, it is held by some to be the finest of the memorials on the church walls.

The chapel is now fully occupied by the organ given in memory of Philip Hutley (1845 – 1935) of Powers Hall by his wife and children. The organ was previously in Ilford Town Hall.

Chancel Arch and Screen

The chancel arch is of the same character and date as the arches of the nave. It is a foot off-centre to allow for the spiral stairway that was at the same time built within the north pier to lead to the rood loft. The lower of the two blocked doorways in the pier opened onto the former pulpit from the stairway which was cut through the pier in the early nineteenth century and which left the structure of the church so precarious. Repaired cracks in the pier can be seen.

The chancel screen was an important feature of the medieval church, framing the entrance to the sacred part of the building. Above was the rood. The cross itself was held by a chain suspended from the point of the arch above, where the staple

from which the chain hung can still be seen. The lower part of the screen remains as it was built and carved in the fifteenth century. One or two small patches of the original red colouring can be found in the folds of the carving.

The upper part of the original screen, the canopy that surmounted it, the rood beam and the rood were all removed at various dates between about 1550 and 1850. In 1854 "the arched openings are divested of their canopy and delicate finishing".[42] The present oak canopy was added in 1891. This is commemorated by the deeply-carved lettering in the riser of the step below, which (translated) reads:

> in pious memory of John Bramston dean of Westminster one time vicar of this church who died 13 November 1889 and of Mary his sister who died 4 May 1886.

In 1919, to improve communication between choir and congregation, the screen was "stretched". The lower part was dropped about eight inches and new oak was neatly fitted to the upright posts.

High up above the chancel arch there is a little window (probably fifteenth century) in the gable. In this was hung the sanctus bell, which was rung at the saying of the Sanctus in the mass.

The Chancel

(The word means "lattice" or "screen"). "The roof is of modern oak panelling, with moulded ribs and foliated bosses; the old roof, removed in 1851, was somewhat similar, but was adorned with armorial bearings which no longer appear".[43]

The arch to the organ chamber, formerly the St. John's Chantry Chapel, is a four-centred arch of the late fifteenth century. It frames an oak screen placed there some time before 1878. Further east, on the north wall, is a window blocked up when the vestry was built. It now holds an ornate memorial, with an excellently carved figure said Nicklaus Pevsner, a mass of unchristian marble and self-complacent praise, as John Bramston called it, to William East, 1726; the sculptor, C. Horsnaile.

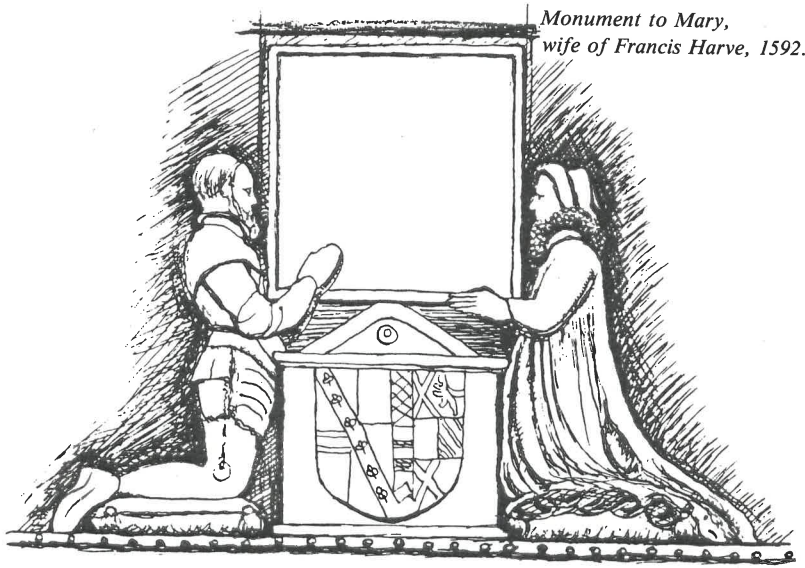
Near the door to the vestry is a small cupboard used as an aumbry for holding the consecrated bread and wine. Further

east is a stone niche which may have been the original aumbry.

The reredos, the richly painted backing to the altar, was made by an Italian craftsman in 1927. The figures, from the left, are: St. Cedd, holding a model of his church at Bradwell, St. George, patron saint of England, in armour with shield, and St. Nicolas. In the centre are the traditional figures of the medieval rood, Jesus and, on either side, his Mother and St. John. On the right are John the Baptist, bare-foot and holding a lamb, St. Alban, holding a martyr's Palm (Witham was for a while in St. Alban's diocese) and St. Martin of Tours, a soldier who refused to be the cause of violent death and so points his sword to the ground (he recalls the association of this church with the College of St. Martin in London). There are insets depicting the Instruments of the Passion and twining symbols of the Life of the Spirit.[44]

The texts that were painted high up on the east wall were whitewashed over early in the 1920's, but traces of the lettering were still visible until recently.

On the wall to the right of the altar is a square-headed niche still in use as a "piscina" or sink; but the outlet was blocked up, probably when the Lady chapel was built.



Monument to Mary, wife of Francis Harve, 1592.

The two massive oak seats were probably made in the fifteenth century; they formerly stood where the choir-stalls now are. They were moved to make way for high walled box pews, one of which in the mid nineteenth century was occupied by the Du Cane family and another by Dr. Tomkin. The present choir-stalls were built in about 1860. Near the altar there was formerly a flat stone in the floor which, translated, read:

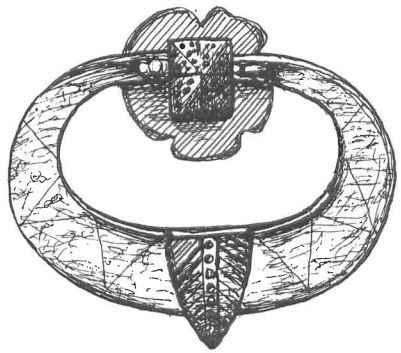
> Here lies Sir Richard Spinney, one time vicar of this church, who died twelfth day of January in the year 1419, on whose soul may God have mercy.

The record of it is dated 1719 and there is a marginal note "This is gone now 1749". The stone may have been turned over and re-used. A stone still in place depicted "a man in brass in his hand a crozier staff". The brass had gone by 1749.[45]

The Vestry

The low entrance from the chancel, its carved arch, the door and its iron handle are all original, dating from the second half of the fourteenth century. The still lower arch on the far side of the vestry led to an upper floor by way of a spiral stairway which it had to fit under.

The floor of the upper room was eventually removed and a new, arched timber roof of fine carpentry is said to have been then built, springing from the level of the former floor. A part of this, including the crown-post against the chancel wall, remains. Repairs and alterations were made to the roof in the nineteenth century and the spiral staircase was demolished. The entrance to the vestry from the churchyard was cut through the outside wall at that time.



Iron door-handle, fourteenth century

From the Reformation in the middle of the sixteenth century until recent times the vestry was the room where the business of the parish was done. Meetings there came to be called the Vestry Meetings. There was an oak fireplace on the inside wall.

On the sill of the lower east window is a group of tiles which bear the arms of Philip Duke of Burgundy. In 1430 he instituted the Order of the Golden Fleece in recognition of the advantages which his kingdom had derived from the wool trade with England and a fleece is to be seen contained in his arms. At that date Sir John Montgomery of Faulkbourne Hall was in the service of the Duke, commanding a body of English troops at Compiegne in France when Joan of Arc was taken prisoner there. He may have brought the tiles home.

There were at one time many funeral hatchments fixed to the clerestorey walls of the nave. A note in the margin of a manuscript book says "all these are broke and gone now, 1749 Sep 29".[46] But in fact one hatchment remains. It is square and smaller and older than the normal diamond form. It reads:

> "The armes of Richard Kendlemarsh and Dennics Barnard his wife 1616".

The arms are painted on pine boarding within a frame and are displayed in the vestry.

The Lady Chapel

This chapel has been recreated in the past sixty-five years. The altar, reredos and surrounding wall panelling carved in oak were placed in position in 1923, together with the screen separating the chapel from the south aisle.

In the corner to the right of the altar is a tall niche that undoubtedly was built to hold a statue of the Virgin Mary. On the south wall is a small niche used as a piscina with a shelf above for the service book.

The arcade to the chancel consists of two wide arches. The columns with shafts connected by deep undercut hollows, which Nicklaus Pevsner describes as "odd...as if re-used or re-tooled", are made of the very hard, brittle and not easily worked Kentish ragstone.[47]

The Royal Arms that originally stood on the rood loft of the

chancel screen were relegated in about 1850 to the west end of the nave. They were placed on the tie-beam close to the tower arch. Between 1921 and 1938 they were brought back to the chancel and subjected to two more moves. Since then this "interesting and splendid piece of carving" has been on the screen between chancel and Lady Chapel.[48]

There are two helms on brackets on the wall and one on the opposite screen. In 1911 there were four helms and they were then in the vestry. The best of them was stolen in the early 1960's, subsequently recognised in an antique dealer's shop and is now preserved in the Tower of London. They were funeral helmets, placed in church as memorials. Four hundred years ago this practice ceased and hatchments were fixed to the walls instead.

The South Aisle

The window nearest to the Lady Chapel is distinctive. It has three lights and has an inner carved arch, the mouldings of which continue down the angles of the window to a low sill. The emphasis on this window appears to have been part of the original design of the church (though the internal mouldings are thought to be half a century later) and suggests that an altar was intended to be placed here. That this is so is confirmed by there having been a recess in the wall which was discovered and sealed up during the restoration of 1877; it probably held the piscina now in the Lady Chapel.

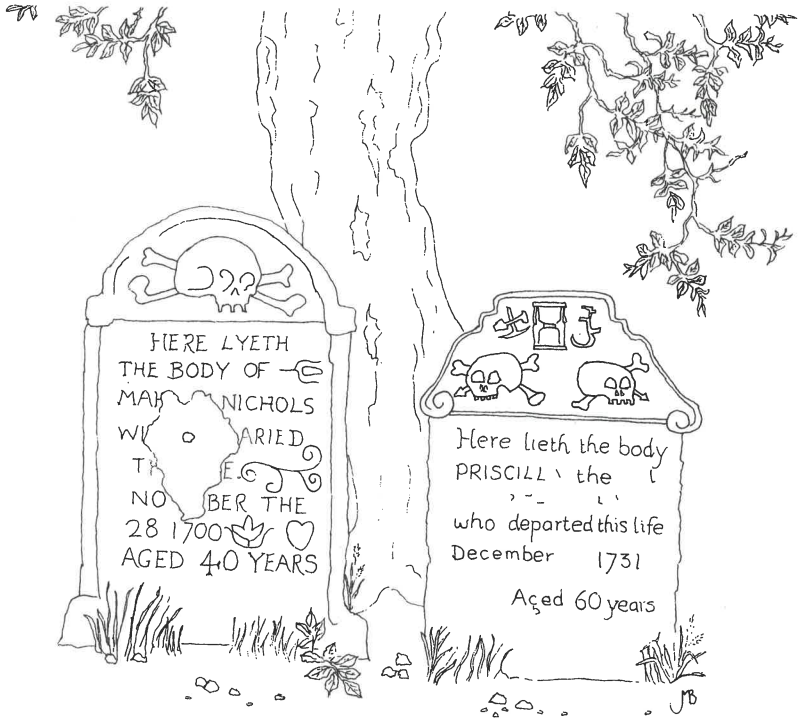
The roof timbers of the aisle are original, the easternmost beam being more elaborately carved as in the north aisle to give distinction to the side chapel here.

The arch to the Lady Chapel has a rugged appearance, in comparison with the nave arcade, from being made of Kentish rag. On the floor "precisely where the original east wall of the aisle was being cut through to connect it with the new chantry founded by Joan Childs" was the spot where the Burgundy tiles in the vestry windowsill were found, placed there presumably when the chapel was built.[49]

On the nave pier at the side of the arch are fixed the broken pieces of a Purbeck marble coffin lid that was found under the Lady Chapel floor. It is probable of the thirteenth century.

On the south wall is a memorial, formerly on the north wall of the chancel but moved here before 1877. It commemorates "the Reverend George Lisle Minister of the gospel and late Rector of Rivenhall...Buried March 31st 1687". The Act of Uniformity passed by the Parliament of 1662 imposed by law the use of the new Prayer Book of that year. The Rector of Rivenhall declined to be confined to it and so could no longer be a minister of the Anglican Church. On 1 November of that year he preached in the barn at Witham Place (now Spring Lodge) and on the following Sunday at his home at Chipping Hill. And so began the Independent Church that has grown into the present United Reformed Church in Newland Street.[50] The action of the government in the 1660's did much to divide Witham into two, the conformists and the non-conformists, a division that was to last for three centuries. But George Lisle's memorial has had an honoured place in the parish church.

In the Churchyard



In Conclusion

And so we return to the entrance through which the people of Witham, dressed in the styles and changing fashions of many centuries, have walked to take part in the celebrations and the sacraments of the Church. For some they were the most memorable events and deepest experiences of their lives. Since the 1660's the parish registers have recorded their baptisms, marriages and burials. The burial register throws light also on some of the people who travelled along the Great Essex Road through the parish but could not continue their journey in this world:

A stranger buried name unknown,
A soldier boy buried that was kild,
A traveller age not known;

and on the occupations of townspeople:

John Darby Baymaker,
William Roberts Church Clerk,
John Barnard a Quaker and Farmer.

These are quoted from a few years around 1780. The registers continue. In 1985 one hundred and forty children were baptised, sixty five couples were married in St. Nicolas and one hundred and twenty five burial services conducted.

The church belongs to the town and parish, fulfilling an essential role in the life of the whole community. The worship has been maintained through the centuries, at times more colourful, at times more crowded, and it continues, the church well-filled Sunday by Sunday. And the purpose of the church is defined on the inscription on the chancel step that commemorates John Bramston. It starts with the letters "A.M.D.G."—the initial letters of the Latin for "To the Greater Glory of God".

EPILOGUE

By Desmond Sherlock, Vicar

I hope you have found this Guide both helpful and interesting. It has been a labour of love by many people – especially Tom Henderson whose brainchild it is. I should like to thank him for all the time and work he has put into it. Incidentally we owe him a similar debt of thanks for the work he has done helping to preserve this lovely and ancient building, the oldest and most beautiful in Witham.

But old as it may be can I remind you that it is not just a museum piece. The history of the Church is still being written – not just in stone and mortar and roof tiles – but in people's lives. Every Sunday a thriving and lively community comes together in worship here. Here in the building we do what has been done by Christian people down the ages from the Day of Pentecost until now. We 'make Eucharist' here together in the Lord's Supper. Two hundred and fifty of the Lord's People meet at the Lord's Table on the Lord's Day.

Here each year many young couples are joined together in marriage. At the font almost every Sunday several children are baptised. Here also for many the last words of God's Grace are said before they pass to the last resting place of their mortal remains. And here each year many receive God's Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We have a thriving Sunday School of nearly a hundred children, we have youth clubs, a toddlers club, scouts, cubs, guides and brownies – bible groups, a Fellowship of Healing – a large and excellent choir. . . one could go on. But the message is – the church is alive!

On Sunday – We invite you to join us. The services

8 a.m. Holy Communion (said) – 1662

10 a.m. Family Communion (sung) – A.S.B.

6 p.m. (4 p.m. in winter months)
Evensong (sung) – 1662

Sunday School – 11.45a.m. All are welcome

We hope you enjoy the beauty of the place and pray you may find something of God's peace here. Why not sit for a while and let the noise of the world die away?

God Bless You
Desmond Sherlock

August 1986

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Written by Tom Henderson

Drawings by Janet Brooks (front cover, pages 8, 12, 21, 30, 38), Eileen Bushell (pages 34 & 35), John Finch (pages 7, 24)

The plan of the church is based by permission on that in the Inventory of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, Essex (Central and South-West), H.M.S.O. 1921.

The quotations from the Westminster Abbey muniments are by courtesy of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster.

M. L. Smith made helpful suggestions and Cyril Ashby's recollections of the church during and after the First World War were valuable.

This booklet is published as the 650th anniversary of the church building is being celebrated.

A programme for the repair of the outside stonework was put in hand in 1980. So far, repairs costing £100,000 have been done, but much remains to do. Indeed, maintenance of the structure depends on continuous care. Contributions to the cost may be made to Witham Parish Church Restoration Fund, 7 Chipping Dell, Witham, Essex. Any profit from the sale of this booklet will go to the same fund.

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